

west of us, from where these swarms come, have set up anti-locust organisations and we ourselves have recently sent help to Iran to assist that country in destroying this source of danger. A statement showing our own arrangements for destroying locusts and hoppers is placed on the Table of the House. [See Appendix IV, annexure No. 23.]

EW RAILWAY LINE IN BIHAR

*791. **Shri L. N. Mishra:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Bihar have asked for restoration of some Railway lines in Bihar in some of their recent correspondence with the Railway Board;

(b) if so, the names of such Railway lines; and

(c) what decision Government have taken in the matter?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shahnawaz Khan): (a) and (b). Yes; the State Government asked for the construction of railway lines from Forbesganj to Raghopore via Partaganj and from Supaul to Chandpipar in the districts of Saharsa and Purnea.

(c) It is neither advisable nor quite safe to construct these lines unless the Kosi river is controlled and its course is stabilised.

TRADE UNIONS

*803. **Shri Rishang Keishing:** (a) Will the Minister of Labour be pleased to state how many trade unions have been registered in Manipur State under the Trade Union Act?

(b) Is the Trade Union Act in force in Manipur State?

(c) How many societies have been registered under the Societies Registration Act?

(d) Which are the authorities appointed for registration of Trade Unions and Societies for development of art, science and charitable institutions?

(e) Is the Shop Assistants Act in force in Manipur State?

The Deputy Minister of Labour (Shri Abid Ali) (a) Nil.

(b) Yes.

(c) Nil.

(d) No authority has yet been appointed for the registration of trade unions. The Registrar of Co-operative Societies and Joint Stock Companies is the authority appointed for the registration of Societies for development of art, science and charitable institutions.

(e) There is no Shops Assistants Act in Manipur.

RECRUITMENT OF POSTAL INSPECTORS

*804. **Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha:** Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the next examination for the recruitment of Postal Inspectors has been postponed *sine die* in Bihar Circle;

(b) whether it is a fact that *viva voce* test, which was previously conducted, has been abolished; and

(c) if so, the reason therefor?

The Minister of Communications (Shri Jagjivan Ram): (a) No.

(b) Yes.

(c) Ever since the test was introduced, the Service Unions and officials were agitating for its abolition on the ground that it was a source of favouritism. As the selected candidates are placed on probation before confirmation and as the probation is primarily intended to judge the same qualities for which the *viva voce* test was introduced, the test was considered redundant.

KULU VALLEY TRANSPORT COMPANY

*805. **Shri Hem Raj:** (a) Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to refer to the answer given to starred question No. 990 asked on 6th December, 1952 and state whether the Special Committee of Inquiry appointed

to look into the affairs of the Kulu Valley Transport Company has completed its investigations?

(b) If so, what are its conclusions and recommendations?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) Yes.

(b) A statement giving a summary of the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix IV, annexure No. 24.]

COTTON

***806. Shri Ram Dhani Das:** (a) Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state whether there has been decline in cotton acreage and yield during the year 1953?

(b) If so, what are the reasons?

(c) What steps if any, are being taken by Government in this matter?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): (a) Yes. The 1952-53 crop shows a decline of 3.2 per cent. in area and 2.6 per cent. in production compared to 1951-52.

(b) Mostly unfavourable weather conditions.

(c) The following measures are being taken in the various States for increasing the acreage and production of cotton during 1953-54:—

(i) Extensive cultivation measures including reclamation of fallow and waste land.

(ii) Intensive cultivation measures such as (1) distribution of improved seeds, fertilisers etc., (2) plant protection measures, (3) provision of irrigation facilities, (4) improved methods of cultivation and (5) propaganda and publicity.

GOODS TRAFFIC ON ASSAM LINK

***807. Shri K. P. Tripathi:** (a) Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state what is the number of wagons daily passing each way on the Assam Link?

(b) How many of these are meant for North Bengal, and how many for Assam?

(c) What are the causes of bottle-neck on this route?

(d) What steps, if any, are proposed to be taken in the matter?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shahnawaz Khan): (a) and (b). The average per day during the four months, April to July 1953 was 128 in the direction from Siliguri to Alipur Duar and 118 in the reverse direction. Of these 96 and 72 respectively were for Assam and rest for North Bengal.

(c) and (d). The capacity of the siliguri-Alipur Duar Section is temporarily reduced on account of the speed restrictions which had to be imposed in consequence of the extensive repairs to bridges damaged during the floods of 1952. The line capacity is being progressively improved by providing additional crossing stations, additional loops at stations increasing the lengths of loops, easing the gradients, improvements in standards of signalling and interlocking, etc. The through-put on the link, however, is dependent to a considerable extent on the transshipment capacity of the Ghats, which bottle-neck will disappear with the construction of bridge across the Ganga near Mokameh.

GODOWNS

***808. Shri Muniswamy:** (a) Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the draft design of Standard Godowns for foodgrains storage has been prepared and approved by the Government of India?

(b) What would be the cost of construction of such a godown?

(c) How many of them will be required for our country?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): (a) Yes, it is a fact that designs for standard types of bulk and bag storage godowns for foodgrains have been prepared by the Government of India.